>

Title : Regarding non-payment of salaries to 14,000 employees of ITI Limited working in various units in the country.

MR. SPEAKER: Now. Mr. Ananth Kumar to speak and only his statement would be recorded and nothing else.

(Interruptions) â€¦*

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (BANGALORE SOUTH): Sir, I want to raise a very important issue of ITI Limited. Around 14,000 employees including officers of ITI Limited which are in Bangalore, Naini, Allahabad, Raebareli, Palakkad, Mankapur and Srinagar, are yet to receive their salaries for the month of May. They have not received the salaries of May, June and July. In this connection, I would also urge the cooperation of the hon. Member of Parliament from Raebareli and the Chairperson of the UPA, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi[r29].

It is because the employees of the ITI had met her twice. Actually, Shri A.N. Malviya, the President and Shri Hanuman Prasad, the General Secretary of the ITI Naini Officers' Association wrote a letter to Shrimati Sonia Gandhi on 10th August, 2006. Again and again, I am drawing her kind attention to this letter.

MR. SPEAKER: You should ask for the attention of the Government.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Sir, I am enlisting her support and the Leader of the House is also here. I would like to quote from that letter.

> "Respected Madam, despite our repeated requests to look after the matter of ITI, if you kindly recall your memory that on your visit to Rae Bareilly on 18.6.2000,â€¦ "

MR. SPEAKER: I did not visit Raebareli recently. By 'you', you can only mean me. You should say 'the hon. Member's visit'.

* Not recorded

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Sir, I am quoting from the letter which Mr. A.N. Malviya, the President and Mr. Hanuman Prasad, the General Secretary of ITI Naini Officers' Association had written to the Chairperson of the UPA and the hon. Member from Raebarely. The Leader of the House is also the hon. Defence Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: I am allowing you to quote because it is a matter about workers. Otherwise, you cannot do like this.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : This letter was written on 10th August, 2006.

> "Respected Madam, despite our repeated requests to look after the matter of ITI, if you kindly recall from your memory that on your visit to Rae Barelli on 18.6.2006, a joint memorandum was given to you regarding the problem of ITI and again a meeting was held with your honour on 21st July, 2006 at your residence in which we have requested to take keen interest on the very humanitarian issue of ITI that we are not getting our salary since the last three months and this is going to be the fourth month. But still no response from your side has yet come. "

Why I am raising this issue today is because my dear friend and trade union leader, Shri Michael Fernandes, and other office bearers came and met me on this issue. You know that, in the next three years, the Government of India is going to spend Rs. 1,30,000 crore on telecom industry but the turnover of ITI is only Rs. 4000 crore. So, required orders should be placed on them and there should be a level-playing field. About 30 per cent of the orders of all the public sector undertakings should be going to them but this has not been paid heed to.

Sir, while mentioning this, I also want to place on record that your kind self, when you were the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Information Technology, have been instrumental to see that ITI Limited is not privatised and it has survived. I thank you for that.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a red-letter day for me.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Sir, good work needs to be complimented. But, at the same time, what is the UPA Government doing? Since 2004, ITI has become a whipping boy. ITI is a telecommunication giant of the country. But why is there no level playing field for it? I would request the hon. Minister to respond on this issue. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, I associate with Mr. Ananth Kumar and I also demand thatâ€¦

MR. SPEAKER: No demand. Association cannot be a demand. Only Mr. Ananth Kumar's speech will go on record.

(Interruptions) â€¦*

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Sir, sufficient orders should be placed on them and there should be a level-playing field. ITI should be merged with BSNL and MTNL and as a short-term relief, three months salary should be immediately disbursed to the employees. Therefore, I would request the Chairperson of the UPA to associate herself with this issue. I also thank Shri Acharia for associating himself with me. I would request the hon. Minister to respond to this issue.

MR. SPEAKER: We must thank the hon. Minister that he is ready to respond on this matter[bru30].

13.00 hrs.

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): Sir, this is under the active consideration of the Ministry. We know about it. Salaries will be paid before *Dussehra* not only in this Company, but also in all other public sector companies, where the salaries have not been paid. The file is now moving and it will be done. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Let me conduct the proceedings.

...(*Interruptions*)

*Not recorded